

did not think of beside her safety, and I was ready for anything desperate, ay, to fight the whole band single-handed.

I climbed the bluff which follows the river high above it, and saw through the trees, some miles away and by the side of the river, smoke arising. Through swamp and brush I pushed, over moss-grown rocks, and across streams, going ever slower and more cautiously as I neared the camp, and at nightfall I was directly opposite the wigwams, well-hidden in the wych-hazel bushes which lined both sides of the stream, and not a hundred paces from my Marie.

The river was broad and still at this place, and the point opposite, covered with tall red pines was plainly a summer camp of the tribe, for the wigwams were carefully made, and the canoes were drawn up on a little sandy beach just above the camp. I waited till it got perfectly dark, and the evening was so quiet that I could hear the Indians talking and merry-making in their solemn fashion, on the other side. Then, as noiselessly as a seal, I swam across and hid, without being seen, in the bushes close under the wigwams. There was evidently liquor amongst them, but this alone was not the cause of the noise they were making; a dispute was going on, and my heart leapt when I heard that Marie was the subject of it—the chief's two sons were each claiming her for his bride, and I now heard, for I understand their tongue, that they had long planned carrying her off. I thought of speaking to the Indians, but what chance was there that they would give up their prize? It only meant my certain death. Slowly, and without noise, I crept up to the back of the nearest wigwam, and while lying there, scarcely daring to breathe, I heard from within a sob, and then a broken voice praying in French. I lifted a corner of the skins, and saw by the light of the fire streaming into the wigwam, my Marie, sitting alone, with her head between her hands and her beautiful hair falling around her shoulders. If I surprise her can she restrain herself? Will she not certainly betray me? But there is no choice, and so I toss a twig towards her. She does not move. I break another. She hears the noise and looks around,—she sees my face in the firelight, and the poor child, taking me for a ghost, screams aloud. I raise my hand but it is too late, two or three Indian women run into the wigwam, and enquire of her in broken French, what ails her.

And now indeed my fate is hanging on a thread. Can she conceal her agitation? Will I be seen? The brave girl stands in front of me, and tells the women in a trembling voice that she was asleep, that she dreamt she was drowning, that she is all right now, not to mind her. They endeavor to make her lie down, and arrange the skins in the wigwam for her. At last she makes them understand enough of her French to know that she wishes to be alone, and, angry at her obstinacy, one by one they go out. Marie now pulls the coverings near to the opening, sitting down on them so as to conceal me, and once more puts her hands, now trembling with excitement, to her face. She remains perfectly still, and though the Indians must be still at the door, yet I cannot help putting out my hand and taking hers. The pressure of her little fingers tells me the secret of her love, and now I care not for fate since now it will come to us both!

At length she whispers "what shall I do," and I answer, "the canoes are our only chance, can you creep through here and reach the river bank without noise?" She has been brought up among hunters, and knows what a cracking twig or rustling leaf means, and answers "yes." I whisper in return, "Wait till you hear an owl hoot, and then come, if they discover me make a dash for the water, I will save you." And now my skill in wood-craft is needed. The canoes lie a hundred yards up stream, on the sand, and I must skirt the edge of the whole camp to reach them. Had the Indians been in their ordinary quiet, it would have been impossible, but their disputing is getting louder than ever, and so, crawling along the ground, listening, waiting, I get to the sandy beach at last, but find that the light of the fire falls full on the yellow barks, and that the figures by it cannot fail to see me if I move within its range. At this moment to my dismay an owl hoots in the trees over me. No time now for thought. In a moment I am in a canoe and flying down along the shore, and in a moment the whole camp is up. They rush to the wigwam and find Marie gone, and the poor girl hearing them behind her, plunges desperately through the bushes and leaps into the canoe which just reaches her in time. A dozen shots strike the water about us as we skim down and gain the rapid water below the pool, but in the darkness we are untouched, and even Indians dare not follow us through the rapids at night. But we are not yet safe; the river winds so much in its descent that they can reach a point below before us. I hurriedly tell Marie of this and bravely she answers, "at least they cannot separate us now."

I bend forward in the canoe, and for a moment clasp her in my arms, and kiss her face upturned to mine; and now there is a new courage in my heart and a new strength in my arms. The rising moon serves to guide us through the rocks, and amongst the eddies and currents. "A divine Providence," says the old man, crossing himself, "takes us safely through rapids which I have feared to descend in the

daytime. But the same moon which assists us now, will serve to show us to our pursuers below. Silently and swiftly we near the point, and, through the rushing of the river surely those are voices I hear on the bank. Crouching low in the canoe, not daring to lift the paddle out of the water, we drift along under the shadow of the trees. In vain! A shot whizzes over us, and the flame gives light for a dozen more. A pang shoots through my left arm, and the paddle drops clattering on the thwarts before me. I feel at the same time the blood pouring over my hand, and the water rising above my knees. A shot has passed through the canoe. Marie tears off her shawl, finds the leak, and stops it. On we drift, and the bullets drop wider and wider of the mark and now, if the canoe will float they cannot reach us. And so, weak from loss of blood, with our birch bark half full of water, we venture to land half a league down the stream.

"Well, Messieurs, I weary you; the rest is soon told. My arm was not broken, and we managed to patch up both it and the canoe, and here are Marie and I to prove it!"

And Marie, no less interested in the narrative than himself, but modestly protesting against any mention of *her* courage and presence of mind, had been sitting beside him all the time; and as the fire flashed from her eye, and her wrinkled cheek flushed, there was not one of us but thought that for such a prize he would gladly have gone through the adventure as the young Joseph did for the young Marie.

"But what of Francois?" The old man's look saddened, and his voice trembled as he answered, "A year afterwards I found near the Indian camp a skeleton, and near it lay a broken knife with "F" cut on the handle."

XXVII.

The Professor, gravely anxious, then arose. "Did you say that the canoe grounded on the Indian's bullets?"

The author's head sank on his breast.

"But how dreadful if the canoe was full of blood!" said Gladys.

A demoniac smile lights the Critic's face, as, feet apart and hands in pockets, he took his stand by the fire-place.

"Answer, Billy," he said.

"Gladys," said Billy, "the canoe was not full of blood."

The Critic still smiled.

"Did that man paddle fifteen miles with a bullet in his arm?" asked the Professor.

"Billy," said Carolus, "I was fishing there last year, and I noticed that the natives weighted their lines with bullets, I suppose——"

XXVIII.

"Oh, Willie, we have missed you,
How I freeze and shiver:
Never did I think to
Find you in the river."

XXIX.

Brethren, I have led you through a difficult and a thorny path. And we are now nearing the end of the Symposium. As I look round upon the breakfast table, and see there the faces of my friends, as I see Gladys there, creator and dispenser of our feast, it is with some feelings of regret that I call upon the final member to tell how he aspires.

He lieth on the hearth-rug, and he gazeth in the fire.

It is Curly.

What dreams before his mental vision rise?

"What dreams?" said Gladys.

"What dreams?" said the Professor.

And then the cuss stood up.

"Curly, old man," he said, "there was a greater than I once who said that he does not attain to immortality

"Who fears to follow,
Where airy voices lead."

XXX.

I think that the Christmas morning was nearly over when we called upon Curly for the last breakfast offering.

The Parson may not have thought the service as sincere as he had hoped.

The guests may not have thought they had been as witty as they might.

And I think perhaps that the Critic was too kind.

But you will remember my friends of the 'VARSITY, that this was at Gladys' call, and Gladys would take no denial.

And this I know, that Gladys thanked us.